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Virginia Visits Santa Claus

Elizabeth Heywood Wyman



THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY

Successful Rural Plays

A Strong List From Which to Select Your Next Play

FARM FOLKS. A Rural Play in Four Acts, by ARTHUR LEWIS TUBBS. For five male and six female characters. Time of playing, two hours and a half. One simple exterior, two easy interior scenes. Costumes, modern. Flora Goodwin, a farmer's daughter, is engaged to Philip Burleigh, a young New Yorker. Philip's mother wants him to marry a society woman, and by falsehoods makes Flora believe Philip does not love her. Dave Weston, who wants Flora himself, helps the deception by intercepting a letter from Philip to Flora. She agrees to marry Dave, but on the eve of their marriage Dave confesses, Philip learns the truth, and he and Flora are reunited. It is a simple plot, but full of speeches and situations that sway an audience alternately to tears and to laughter.

HOME TIES. A Rural Play in Four Acts, by ARTHUR LEWIS TUBBS. Characters, four male, five female. Plays two hours and a half. Scene, a simple interior—same for all four acts. Costumes, modern. One of the strongest plays Mr. Tubbs has written. Martin Winn's wife left him when his daughter Ruth was a baby. Harold Vincent, the nephew and adopted son of the man who has wronged Martin, makes love to Ruth Winn. She is also loved by Len Everett, a prosperous young farmer. When Martin discovers who Harold is, he orders him to leave Ruth. Harold, who does not love sincerely, yields. Ruth discovers she loves Len, but thinks she has lost him also. Then he comes back, and Ruth finds her happiness.

THE OLD NEW HAMPSHIRE HOME. A New England Drama in Three Acts, by FRANK DUMONT. For seven males and four females. Time, two hours and a half. Costumes, modern. A play with a strong heart interest and pathos, yet rich in humor. Easy to act and very effective. A rural drama of the "Old Homestead" and "Way Down East" type. Two exterior scenes, one interior, all easy to set. Full of strong situations and delightfully humorous passages. The kind of a play everybody understands and likes.

THE OLD DAIRY HOMESTEAD. A Rural Comedy in Three Acts, by FRANK DUMONT. For five males and four females. Time, two hours. Rural costumes. Scenes rural exterior and interior. An adventurer obtains a large sum of money from a farm house through the intimidation of the farmer's niece, whose husband he claims to be. Her escapes from the wiles of the villain and his female accomplice are both starting and novel.

A WHITE MOUNTAIN BOY. A Strong Melodrama in Five Acts, by CHARLES TOWNSEND. For seven males and four females, and three supers. Time, two hours and twenty minutes. One exterior, three interiors. Costumes easy. The hero, a country lad, twice saves the life of a banker's daughter, which results in their betrothal. A scoundrelly clerk has the banker in his power, but the White Mountain boy finds a way to checkmate his schemes, saves the banker, and wins the girl.

**THE PENN PUBLISHING COMPANY
PHILADELPHIA**

Virginia Visits Santa Claus

By

ELIZABETH HEYWOOD WYMAN



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Virginia Visits Santa Claus

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No. 1.

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Virginia Visits Santa Claus

CHARACTERS

VIRGINIA, *a little girl who wants to believe in Santa Claus*

HARRY	her brother
ISABEL	her friend
HAZEL	another friend
CHRISTMAS SPIRIT, <i>indispensable at Christmas Time</i>	
SANTA CLAUS	<i>the children's friend</i>
BROWNIE STRONG and BROWNIE HANDY, <i>Santa's helpers</i>	
RED CAP	<i>Santa's swift messenger</i>
TWINKLE EYES and SHARP EARS, <i>Santa's reporters</i>	
JUMPING JACK	<i>an animated toy</i>
JACK-IN-BOX	<i>a surprise package</i>
FRENCH DOLL	<i>the best of all</i>

TIME OF PLAYING:—About forty-five minutes.

STAGE SETTING

SCENES I and III. If possible hang back and side curtains of inexpensive cheese-cloth to form background. Out of black paper cut a silhouette of a fireplace and place back-stage, center. Throw a red light throughout scenes.

SCENE II. Buy the necessary amount of crêpe paper, stretch full length and cut into short width streamers. Sprinkle with artificial snow and hang over the white curtains. The streamers should be fastened on wire or heavy twine, and if hooks are placed at the top of the white curtains, it will take but a scant minute to put them in place. Remove fireplace. Jack-in-Box (see illustration) is placed right, and doll stands at left. Throw white light throughout scene. If a piece of gauze is stretched across the proscenium arch, the play will seem as a dream to the spectators.

Virginia Visits Santa Claus¹

SCENE I.—*Child's room, with fireplace at center back.*

(Curtain rises, disclosing VIRGINIA sitting in front of fireplace reading. As she reads to herself, some one behind the scenes recites, "'Twas the Night Before Christmas." At close of poem VIRGINIA speaks.)

VIRGINIA. That's the most bee-utiful poem.

HARRY (rushes in). Hello there, sis. What are you doing?

VIRGINIA. Oh, Harry, did you ever see Santa Claus' cunning little reindeer?

HARRY. Naw. What you reading, anyhow? (Looks over her shoulder.) Aw, that silly stuff. Teacher read it to us in school yesterday.

VIRGINIA. But don't you believe in Santa Claus or anything?

HARRY. Well, you never saw him, did you?

VIRGINIA (doubtfully). No-o, but the books tell just what he looks like and all. (Eagerly.) Do you suppose p'r'aps I might see him, to-night, if I looked out of the window after it's all dark?

HARRY (in a superior way). Well, perhaps seeing you're such a kid and a girl too, you might try, but I'm not going to get fooled. I'm too old for that.

VIRGINIA. I'm going to hang up some stockings like the story, and then Santa Claus will just have to come.

¹ The paragraphs within brackets may be omitted.

Anyway, he said he would in the letter he wrote me. Don't you remember, Harry?

HARRY. Yes, but — (Stops short.) Oh, all right, sis.

VIRGINIA (*goes to table*). Oh, goody, Harry. Mother's left her sewing here. (*Pulls out stockings*.) You write the names so Santa Claus will know what to put in. (HARRY *writes*.) Wouldn't it be dreadful if he made a mistake and gave us some grown-up things? (*Holds up stockings one by one*.) Here's one for Daddy, and one for Mother, and one for you, and one for me. Now let's pin them up. (*Holds up stockings*.) This beautiful long one is for Mother because she's just the loveliest mother I ever had. (*Takes up sock*.) Doesn't Daddy's look funny? It isn't nearly as big as Mother's, but I don't believe he'll care. Big men never get so many things for Christmas. (*Takes HARRY's*.) Here's yours. It'll hold quite a lot. Do you think it's big enough?

HARRY. Sure thing, sis. He'll manage somehow.

[VIRGINIA (*looks at her own anxiously*). Mine's awfully little. I don't see how Santa can ever get my new dolly in it. Do you?

HARRY. I tell you, sis; you take one of Mother's out of her basket and I'll pin your name on it.

VIRGINIA (*with a giggle*). He'll think I have awfully big feet. Do you really suppose he won't care, Harry?

HARRY. Sure he won't, sis. Girls always get a lot. Give it to me. (*Pins it up*.) Here come Hazel and Isabel. I'm going out with my sled. (*Exit*.)]

(Enter HAZEL and ISABEL.)

ISABEL. My mother told me I could stay until six o'clock. I think she's fixing something for our Christmas tree.

HAZEL. Mine told me to run out and play. She said little girls shouldn't see too much on Christmas Eve.

VIRGINIA. Look what I've been doing. I've hung up all our stockings just where Santa Claus can see them when he comes down the chimney.

ISABEL. Do you believe there's a Santa Claus? I don't. All the girls say there isn't any and they'll think you're an awful baby if you do, won't they, Hazel?

[HAZEL. Yes, I don't believe there's any. I heard my mamma talking to my papa about it.

ISABEL. What did they say?

HAZEL. Well, I know, but I'm not going to tell.

ISABEL. You think you're awfully smart. Anyway I know what I'm going to get for Christmas. I'm going to have a great big doll.

HAZEL. It isn't going to be as nice as mine.

ISABEL. Yes, it is too, and my doll is going to be as big as a baby. You see if it isn't.

HAZEL. Well, it isn't going to be as nice as mine.

ISABEL. Yes, it is, too.

HAZEL. No, it isn't.

VIRGINIA. Oh, girls, Santa Claus will hear you and he won't like it at all if you talk that way.

ISABEL (*crossly*). There isn't any Santa Claus, I tell you.]

HAZEL. Santa Claus is — It's just —

(Whispers to ISABEL.) (Aloud.) Isn't it, Isabel?

VIRGINIA (*almost in tears*). But he answered the letter I wrote him. I found a note in the fireplace.

ISABEL. Aren't you a baby!

(*Piano begins to play softly.*)

VIRGINIA. Oh, girls, where is that lovely music?

ISABEL. I don't hear any music.

HAZEL. Neither do I.

(*Enter CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.*)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Can you see me, Virginia?

VIRGINIA. Oh, how beautiful, girls, look!

HAZEL. Look at what?

ISABEL. I don't see anything.

(*The two girls busy themselves with their dolls.*)

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT (*to VIRGINIA*). You didn't see me, Virginia; but I've been right near you all the time

you were hanging up the stockings for Daddy and Mother and brother Harry. How would you like to go with me to see Santa Claus in his workshop?

VIRGINIA. Oh! Oh! Then there is a Santa Claus!

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Of course there is. I go about with him every year all over the world. People don't often see me, but Santa could never do all he has to do without me.

VIRGINIA. And you're really going to take me to see him!

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. Yes, if you want to.

VIRGINIA. Oh, goody, goody. And can Isabel and Hazel go too?

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. I'm afraid not.

VIRGINIA. Oh, dear—they're my best friends.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. I'm sorry, dear, but they can't hear me or see me, and so I couldn't possibly take them to see Santa Claus. They don't even believe there is a Santa Claus. But I tell you what we'll do. We'll just put them to sleep now. Perhaps we'll be able to bring Santa Claus back with us, and when they wake up I'm sure they will be able to see him.

(Goes over to HAZEL and ISABEL and waves her wand over them, singing to the tune of "Sweet and Low.")

Sleep and dream, sleep and dream,
Dream of the lovely Christ-child,
While the stars of Christmas gleam,
Dream of his mercy mild.
Dream of love beyond our ken,
Sent from heaven to mortal men,
Bringing goodwill to all.
Dream, my little ones, dream, my pretty ones,
dream!

CURTAIN

SCENE II.—SANTA CLAUS' *Workshop*.

(In background boy dressed as jumping jack, and girl dressed as French doll. Two brownies are seated working over a sled and a wagon. JACK-IN-BOX, L.)

(Enter SANTA CLAUS.)

SANTA CLAUS. Hurry up there, my lads. It's getting late, and I may need that sled and wagon. Red Cap ought to be back now from his trip to earth. (Two brownies hammer busily on sled and wagon. Enter CHRISTMAS SPIRIT and VIRGINIA.) Well, well! Here's a little earth child. She must know you very well, Christmas Spirit, or you could never have brought her all the way to my house.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. This is Virginia, Santa. They told her there wasn't any Santa Claus, so I brought her to see you.

SANTA. Ho, ho! You can't kill the old chap yet. The children couldn't get along without him. Didn't you get the letter I wrote you?

VIRGINIA (*timidly*). Yes, sir!

SANTA. And didn't you hang up your stocking? I might want to put a sled in it. Ho, ho!

(Two brownies have stopped their work and have crept up to VIRGINIA.)

BROWNIE STRONG. What's she made of?

BROWNIE HANDY. Will she break?

SANTA CLAUS. Here, you brownies! Back to your work. She's a little earth child, and you mustn't touch her. (To CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.) Christmas Spirit, you know how to make these toys work. Suppose you show them to Virginia while I go out and see if I can find Red Cap with my telescope. Can't start off with my sleigh till he's back. (Goes out. CHRISTMAS SPIRIT waves wand and toys come successively to life. Dolls dance. Wooden soldiers drill. Drum and fife play. Finally all go off, leaving only FRENCH DOLL,

JUMPING JACK and BROWNIES *working on sled and wagon.* Enter SANTA CLAUS.) Can't see where that fellow is. (As RED CAP enters on a run.) Oh, here he is at last.

RED CAP. Quickest trip I ever made. Round the earth in ten minutes with my magic cap. All the children are expecting you, Santa. I picked up two letters for you. Thought I got 'em all on my last round.

(*Hands letters to SANTA CLAUS.*)

SANTA CLAUS (*opens letters*). Well, well! Bless my soul! Here's a little girl who never saw the snow till this year. Now she wants a sled so she can ride down hill with the other boys and girls. Brownie Strong, finished with that sled?

BROWNIE STRONG. Yes, sir. Just finished.

SANTA CLAUS. Take it out and load it on my sleigh. Can't disappoint that little girl. (*Opens other letter. Chuckles.*) Now what do you think this fellow wants? What do you guess, Virginia?

VIRGINIA. I think maybe he wants a wagon.

SANTA CLAUS. Well, well, well! What a bright little girl you are. That's just it. Wants to ride down the sidewalk when the snow is gone. Brownie Handy, that wagon finished? (As BROWNIE HANDY *nods*.) Take it out. (BROWNIE HANDY *wheels wagon off stage.*) Pretty big sleighful I'll have this year, but my reindeer are strong. Most time for me to get off, too. Not much left in the shop. We'll call Twinkle Eyes and Sharp Ears. They can tell me if we've missed anybody. (*Claps his hands.* Enter TWINKLE EYES and SHARP EARS. TWINKLE EYES has on huge pair of goggles. SHARP EARS has telephone operator's cap.) Look all over the earth, Twinkle Eyes, and see if you can find any child that we've missed.

TWINKLE EYES (*peers about*). I see a little boy way off out West. It's snowing, and his papa hasn't come back from town, and he's crying because he's afraid Santa Claus can't find his house. I don't think he's on your list, Santa.

SANTA CLAUS. That will never do. Christmas Spirit, put him to sleep and send him a pleasant dream, and we'll find a toy. (*Piano plays softly tune of "Sweet and Low," and CHRISTMAS SPIRIT waves her wand slowly as SANTA CLAUS looks about and finally stops at JUMPING JACK.*) Just the thing! (To BROWNIES who have just crept in and are looking curiously at VIRGINIA, touching her with their fingers, etc.) Here, Brownie Strong and Brownie Handy, bring out Jumping Jack, and show Virginia how he can jump.

(*Two BROWNIES lift him out by the elbows. First BROWNIE pulls string fastened to back of his collar. He lifts arms and legs in jumping-jack fashion.*)

VIRGINIA (*claps her hands*). Oh, what fun! Do it again. (BROWNIE repeats.)

SANTA CLAUS (*at close of performance*). There, we don't want to wear him all out before Freddie gets him. Take him out, Strong and Handy. (BROWNIES carry him out.) Now, Sharp Ears, do you hear anything?

SHARP EARS. I hear a little newsboy in a poor tenement. He's telling his mother that he has a picture book to give his little sister, but he hasn't a cent to spend for his brother.

SANTA CLAUS. We can't have that. (*Looks around.*) Doll won't do. (*Goes over to box.*) What's in this box? I've forgotten.

(*Raps on the side. Boy dressed as jack-in-box pops out.*)

VIRGINIA (*shrieks with joy*). Oh! Oh!

SANTA CLAUS (*holding his sides with laughter*). Come along now, Brownies. Put him back and load him on the sleigh. Time we were going.

(BROWNIES *shut box. Just as they have it closed, out he pops again, and they jump back in fright. They close it again and shove it off.*)

VIRGINIA. But there's the dolly. You're not going to leave her all alone!

SANTA CLAUS. No, no, no! Of course not! Strong and Handy, bring her here.

(BROWNIES *take hold of her arms. She walks out stiffly and stands in front of stage. SANTA CLAUS presses upon her body and she says "Mamma."*)

VIRGINIA. She's the very loveliest of all! (*Shyly.*) Is anybody going to have her?

SANTA CLAUS (*winks at others*). How about it, everybody? I move we take it to a little girl whose name begins with "V" and ends in "a." All in favor say "Aye."

ALL. Aye!

SANTA CLAUS. But you mustn't tell. It's a secret.

VIRGINIA. Oh, goody, goody! I guess!

SANTA CLAUS. Dear, dear. Little girls mustn't guess too much. Take the doll, brownies. Tuck her in well so she won't catch cold and lose her voice.

(BROWNIES *walk doll off stage. HANDY presses her slyly as they are going off and she cries "Mamma."*)

Red Cap, Twinkle Eyes, Sharp Ears, bring around the reindeer. We must be off. (*The three run off stage. In a moment sleigh-bells are heard. To VIRGINIA.*) Ready now, little girl. We'll drive down the Milky Way and say hello to the man in the moon. He's a good friend of mine. Come on, come on.

(*Takes one of VIRGINIA's hands and the CHRISTMAS SPIRIT the other, and they start off stage as curtain falls.*)

SCENE III.—*Same room as in first scene. HAZEL and ISABEL are asleep in chairs. Sleigh-bells are heard outside.*

ISABEL (*rubs her eyes and wakes up*). What's that?

HAZEL (*also wakes up*). I hear sleigh-bells.

(SANTA CLAUS *enters with VIRGINIA.*)

SANTA CLAUS. Hello, hello! Anybody here that doesn't believe in Santa Claus?

ISABEL. We all do now.

VIRGINIA. Where do you suppose I've been? To Santa Claus' house, and he has the most interesting toys; haven't you, Santa Claus?

SANTA CLAUS. Of course, of course. Finest in the sky.

VIRGINIA. And we came sliding down past the moon, and the man in the moon leaned out when he saw us and he waved his hand.

HAZEL. Oh, take me back with you, Santa.

SANTA CLAUS. Can't do it. It will be broad daylight now by the time I get started back. Lots to do. Have to get to — Sunday school in about five minutes, then all around the world—United States, Europe, Asia, Africa, everywhere where anybody knows me. Come along now. What do you want of me? (*Goes to fireplace.*) I see. Stockings to fill! (*Reads.*) Mother, Daddy, Harry, Virginia. Can't do it till you youngsters are all in bed. (*As they are crowded around the stockings, the two BROWNIES enter softly, one from each side, creep up and tweak the girls' hair. Girls turn around with a little scream. BROWNIES turn somersaults and play other antics while girls look on delightedly.*) You young rascals, how did you get here?

VIRGINIA (*excitedly*). I know, I know. They were on the runners of the sleigh all the time and you didn't know!

SANTA CLAUS (*laughs*). Ho, ho! Well, the youngsters will play on Christmas Eve, but now you're here you might as well make yourselves useful. Go get that—you know what—then when somebody's asleep we'll put it in this stocking. (*Holds up VIRGINIA's stocking and laughs again.*) Ho, ho! (*BROWNIES run out. Turns to children.*) Now if you youngsters don't make up your minds to go to bed, I'll never get my work done, never in the world.

ISABEL. Please, Santa, let me tell you something.

I was asleep when you came, and I dreamed that I was the little lame boy down the street, and I was so poor, and I was afraid you weren't going to bring me anything for Christmas. I'm going to ask my mother if I can't take my money out of the bank and buy him something, and you won't forget to stop at his house, will you, Santa?

SANTA CLAUS. No, of course not! We'll see that he has the best Christmas yet, you and I.

HAZEL. Isn't that funny? I had a dream too. I thought I went to see Angelique Mantelli. She's a little girl in our school and she's been sick. She did so want a doll for Christmas. I'm going to give her Corinne. She isn't new, but she's my own dearest doll, and I know she'll love her.

SANTA CLAUS. She certainly will, and I think I have a carriage in my sleigh that will be just the thing!

HAZEL. Oh, how lovely! Won't she be pleased! (*Piano plays softly and CHRISTMAS SPIRIT enters, smiling at the children.*) Oh! Oh! Isn't she lovely?

ISABEL. Who are you? You're such a pretty lady.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. I'm the spirit of Christmas. I come down to earth each year to bring love and kindness and joy to all who will have me. Will you keep me with you this Christmas time?

HAZEL. We want to keep you all the time; don't we, girls?

(*All run to her and cling to her as she smiles down on them. Curtain falls on tableau. Some one sings "Holy Night." During the singing, curtain is again lifted.*)

(*As encore, characters may be grouped on stage with JACK-IN-BOX popping out, FRENCH DOLL crying "Mamma," and JUMPING JACK performing in turn. At a signal they all sing "Kriss Kringle is Coming," or some other jolly Christmas song.*)

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